



F-35 Lightning II Program

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F - 35 INTELLIGENCE TRAINING BOARD OUTLINES FUTURE

The first joint service Intelligence Realistic Training Review Board (IRTRB) convened Nov. 30 through Dec. 2 at the 33rd Fighter Wing to review and modify existing F-35 intelligence curriculum and forecast future F-35 Lightning II intelligence training in preparation for the Air Force reaching initial operational capability in late 2016.

The IRTRB meets at least twice a year to analyze the effectiveness of training requirements; evaluate tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP); assess the currency and effectiveness of the formal course; and make necessary changes to meet the needs of the services.

This year's attendees were representatives from operational intelligence communities from Air Combat Command, Air Education and Training Command, the United States Marine Corps and the department of the Navy.

"It is important to get all of the community SME's together one more time before the airframe goes IOC in this type of forum so we can get a good solution for intelligence training requirements," said Capt. Stephanie Fraioli, 33rd Operations Support Squadron F-35A IFTU course chief. "Air Force leaders must continue to understand the direct correlation between fielding a new platform and ensuring sufficient capability to collect, exploit, analyze and disseminate battlefield intelligence to operational decision makers."

During the meeting the board discussed the need and means to establish a baseline education program for Airmen, Sailors and Marines prior to attending intelligence training. The board also discussed challenges the F-35 intelligence community will face and laid out plans to resolve them. One such challenge at Hill Air Force Base is the need for intelligence Airmen to be dual qualified on the F-35 and the F-16 Fighting Falcon.

One of the goals was to discuss whether there is a need to transition the IFTU to a joint IFTU for the three services in the future. As the first fifth-generation fighter aircraft with multiple variants, there is a need for the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps to map out requirements for comprehensive intelligence support to these airframes.

"All three services are in the process of shaping what fifth-generation intelligence support should look like for the F-35," said Maj. Tyrel Gibson, 33rd Operations Support Squadron senior intelligence officer. "As a joint intelligence community, we've identified that the different temperaments, talents and convictions each service will bring to this F-35 IFTU will only work to strengthen ties, support unit stand-up and properly answer the intelligence demand this aircraft will generate."

Lt. Heather Maclin, Strike Fighter Squadron VFA-101 intelligence officer, stated the F-35 IRTRB was a good opportunity for all three branches to collaborate and capitalize on each variant's capabilities.

"In my opinion, all services involved in the Joint Strike Fighter program should want to execute aviation intelligence in a parallel manner," Maclin said. "The Air Force's IFTU gives the Navy and the Marine Corps the opportunity to execute aviation intelligence with joint cognizance."

As the Air Force and Navy prepare for IOC, the intelligence community anticipates having a larger role in the mission planning and post mission actions of fifth-generation aircraft. To accommodate this larger role, the 33rd Operations Support Squadron is poised welcome our sister service intelligence professionals should the joint IFTU be formally approved.



The first joint service intelligence realistic training review board meets to review and develop F-35 Lightning II intelligence training at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., Dec. 2, 2015. During this meeting, leaders from the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps discussed changes to intelligence training and outlined future plans for the F-35 program. (Courtesy Photo/ Lt. Heather Maclin)